

General McLane School District Technology Training

Google Docs

Google offers a host of tools available. The nice thing is that you will be able to access these documents from any computer that can connect to the Internet.

Let's get started:

Create a Google Account

If you already have a personal Google account, I would suggest creating another just for your class; use your school email address in creating the account if you used your Gmail address to create your Google account.

Go to www.google.com

At right, click the link Sign In

Click Create an account now

Choose a username and password that will be easy for your students to remember.

After the account has been created, you will simply click Sign In and enter your user name and password to access the account and documents.

Open a Google Doc

At the top left, click the link for More, point to Documents, and click

In the blue toolbar, click New and choose the type of document you want

Documents and folders will appear in the pane at the left

Types of Docs

Document—text document

Presentation—slide show

Spreadsheet—make lists of information or make calculations

Form—create an input screen to gather data

Folder—holds documents

Create a Folder

Go to New, Folder

In the light blue bar, click on New Folder and rename the folder

Folder will appear in pane on left

Move a document to a folder

Place a checkmark next to a document to move

In blue toolbar, click Move and select destination

If you want the document to show only in the folder, click Hide

Suggestions for classroom use

Students will need to be taught the value of privacy. Since they are all logging in to one account, they will all have access to each other's documents. You can explain that this folder and the documents inside are no different than any folders or documents in the classroom or on someone's desk. Talk to them about the importance of only accessing their own folders/documents.

You can also address the importance of the password. Explain that a password is given to those who need to have access to the account. Since all the members of the class have the password, they will need to keep it safe so that others outside the class (friends in other classes, for example) cannot access the account. A password should be kept secret.

Can parents have the password? It's up to you, if you want parents to have access and see what's in the student's folder. Again, I think it's no different than a paper folder with paper documents inside. What's to keep a parent from opening a child's homework folder?

Is Google Docs appropriate for every assignment? No, probably not. Since the students could access each other's work, there is always a risk of cheating or someone deleting another's work. If it's a very important assignment with a lot of point value, you might think twice about using Google Docs, especially if there is reason to believe someone may tamper with someone else's documents. However, assignments given in class that students are to work on outside of class are completely appropriate for Google Docs, as are collaborative projects.